

What is claimed is:

1. A machine-implemented method of modifying an electronic document, the method comprising:
  - receiving a request from a client;
  - producing data corresponding to the client request;
  - generating instructions to modify an electronic document having a predetermined final format that defines an appearance of the electronic document, the generated instructions specifying one or more operations to modify the electronic document's predetermined final format at the client to accommodate the produced data; and
  - transmitting the produced data and the generated instructions to the client.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein the produced data includes a location from which the client is to retrieve the electronic document.
3. The method of claim 1, wherein the produced data includes a file name for the electronic document, which is already locally accessible by the client.
4. The method of claim 1, wherein the operations to modify the predetermined final format at the client comprise adding final format information to the electronic document without changing pre-existing final format information in the electronic document.
5. The method of claim 4, wherein the generated instructions comprise a script.

6. The method of claim 5, wherein the generated instructions further comprise at least one tag indicating a relative order in which the produced data is to be imported into the electronic document and the instructions are to be performed.

7. The method of claim 6, wherein the at least one tag is a before tag, an after tag or a document tag, wherein the before tag indicates that the produced data is to be imported into the electronic document before the instructions are performed, the after tag indicates that the produced data is to be imported into the electronic document after the instructions are performed, and the document tag indicates that at least a portion of the generated instructions are to be inserted into the electronic document.

8. The method of claim 6, wherein the electronic document comprises a form document including one or more form fields, which are responsive to user actions.

9. The method of claim 8, wherein adding the final format information causes a new visual object to overlay one or more pre-existing visual objects in the electronic document.

10. The method of claim 8, wherein the generated instructions are specific to the electronic document, and the operations to modify the predetermined final format at the client result in one or more of the following document changes: field identity change, field location re-arrangement, and field content change.

11. The method of claim 8, wherein the client comprises a device having a memory storing the electronic document.
12. The method of claim 8, wherein the client comprises a software application.
13. The method of claim 8, wherein the client request comprises a database search request, and wherein producing data comprises retrieving data from a database.
14. The method of claim 8, wherein producing data comprises generating data using scripts.
15. The method of claim 8, wherein generating instructions comprises:  
retrieving initial instructions; and  
customizing the initial instructions to be specific to the electronic document.
16. A machine-implemented method of modifying an electronic document, the method comprising:  
obtaining an electronic document having a predetermined final format that defines an appearance of the electronic document;  
sending a request to a server;  
receiving from the server data and instructions to modify the electronic document;  
and

modifying the electronic document's predetermined final format in accordance with the received instructions to accommodate the received data.

17. The method of claim 16, wherein obtaining the electronic document comprises receiving the electronic document.

18. The method of claim 16, wherein obtaining the electronic document comprises retrieving the electronic document as directed by the instructions.

19. The method of claim 16, wherein modifying the electronic document's predetermined final format comprises adding final format information to the electronic document without changing pre-existing final format information in the electronic document.

20. The method of claim 19, wherein the instructions comprise a script.

21. The method of claim 20, wherein the instructions further comprise at least one tag indicating a relative order in which the produced data is to be imported into the electronic document and the instructions are to be performed.

22. The method of claim 21, wherein the at least one tag is a before tag, an after tag or a document tag, wherein the before tag indicates that the produced data is to be imported into the electronic document before the instructions are performed, the after tag

indicates that the produced data is to be imported into the electronic document after the instructions are performed, and the document tag indicates that at least a portion of the generated instructions are to be inserted into the electronic document.

23. The method of claim 21, wherein the electronic document comprises a form document including one or more form fields, which are responsive to user actions.

24. A machine-implemented method of modifying an electronic document, the method comprising:

- receiving a request from a client;
- producing data corresponding to the client request;
- generating instructions to modify an electronic document defining visual information to be displayed, the generated instructions specifying one or more operations to modify the electronic document at the client to accommodate the produced data, and the generated instructions including at least one tag indicating a relative order in which the produced data is to be imported into the electronic document and the instructions are to be performed; and

transmitting the produced data and the generated instructions to the client.

25. The method of claim 24, wherein the at least one tag indicates that the produced data is to be imported into the electronic document before the instructions are performed.

26. The method of claim 24, wherein the at least one tag indicates that the produced data is to be imported into the electronic document after the instructions are performed.

27. The method of claim 24, wherein the at least one tag indicates that at least a portion of the generated instructions are to be inserted into the electronic document.

28. The method of claim 24, wherein the at least a portion of the generated instructions result in dynamically set preference settings for the electronic document.

29. The method of claim 24, wherein the operations to modify the electronic document comprise adding formatting information to the electronic document without changing pre-existing formatting information in the electronic document.

30. The method of claim 29, wherein the generated instructions comprise a script.

31. The method of claim 30, wherein the electronic document comprises a form document including one or more form fields, which are responsive to user actions.

32. A machine-readable medium embodying information indicative of instructions for causing one or more machines to perform operations comprising:

receiving a request from a client;

producing data corresponding to the client request;

generating instructions for an electronic document having a predetermined final format that defines an appearance of the electronic document, the generated instructions specifying one or more operations to modify the predetermined final format at the client to accommodate the produced data; and

transmitting the produced data and the generated instructions to the client.

33. The machine-readable medium of claim 32, wherein the produced data includes a location from which the client is to retrieve the electronic document.

34. The machine-readable medium of claim 32, wherein the produced data includes a file name for the electronic document, which is already locally accessible by the client.

35. The machine-readable medium of claim 32, wherein the operations to modify the predetermined final format at the client comprise adding final format information to the electronic document without changing pre-existing final format information in the electronic document.

36. The machine-readable medium of claim 35, wherein the generated instructions comprise a script.

37. The machine-readable medium of claim 36, wherein the generated instructions further comprise at least one tag indicating a relative order in which the produced data is

to be imported into the electronic document and the instructions are to be performed.

38. The machine-readable medium of claim 37, wherein the at least one tag is a before tag, an after tag or a document tag, wherein the before tag indicates that the produced data is to be imported into the electronic document before the instructions are performed, the after tag indicates that the produced data is to be imported into the electronic document after the instructions are performed, and the document tag indicates that at least a portion of the generated instructions are to be inserted into the electronic document.

39. The machine-readable medium of claim 37, wherein the electronic document comprises a form document including one or more form fields, which are responsive to user actions.

40. The machine-readable medium of claim 39, wherein adding the final format information causes a new visual object to overlay one or more pre-existing visual objects in the electronic document.